

REMARKS

Applicant has collapsed claim 32 into independent claim 26 by this amendment. Claims 29 and 32 have also been amended to more particularly describe the invention.

Rejections under Title 35 U.S.C. § 112.

Applicants have made amendments to claims 29 and 36-38 such that a proper Markush recitation and proper antecedent basis is provided. Withdrawal of rejections based on Section 112 is respectfully requested.

Rejections under Title 35 U.S.C. § 102.

According to the Office Action, various claims were rejected based on Section 102 as being anticipated by U.S. Pat. Nos. 5,122,138; 5,860,974; 5,569,242; 5,514,130; or 5,800,429.

By this amendment, Applicant has collapsed claim 32 into claim 26. Claim 32, which is directed to a device having a return electrode on the shaft, was not anticipated by these references according to the Office Action. The above listed references do not show this feature. Claim 26 and all claims depending therefrom are thus no longer anticipated by any of the above mentioned references. Withdrawal of these rejections is respectfully requested.

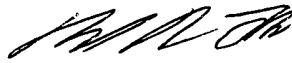
Regarding the Section 102 rejection based on U.S. Pat. No. 5,944,715 to Goble et al., Applicant submits it is not available as a prior art reference against the subject application. The Goble et al. patent was first filed in the United Kingdom on June 29, 1996. The Goble et al. patent has a critical reference date of its U.S. filing date or November 25, 1996 (*see* MPEP § 2136.03), which is after Applicants priority date of June 7, 1995 corresponding to issued patent no. 5,697,281. This priority claim has been acknowledged by the Examiner according to page 1 of the Office Action. Accordingly, withdrawal of this rejection is respectfully requested.

SUMMARY

Applicant believes that this response addresses all outstanding issues raised by the previous Office Action. Applicant believes that all claims are in condition for allowance and requests notice of such.

If the Examiner believes a telephone conference would expedite prosecution of this application a call to the undersigned attorney will be appreciated.

Respectfully submitted,



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June 11, 2003

Date

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